
Oregon & California Railroad

O & C Railroad The first rail out of Portland was laid in 1869 and by December, 1872, the tracks were completed to Roseburg. Construction of the O & C Railroad was resumed from Roseburg in 1881. Grave Creek Tunnel, better known in later years as Tunnel No. 9, was completed north of Hugo July 4. The first official train arrived in Grants Pass December 2, 1883.^{1&2}

Southern Pacific Railroad acquired control in 1884 and the "last spike" or final ceremony in that railroad was driven at Ashland, Oregon in December 17, 1887, connecting Oregon and California.^{1&2}

Merlin Post Office On the original application for a post office on October 11, 1885, the name "McAllister" is crossed out and Brandt is used. The name was changed back to McAllister on November 23, 1885. The name was later changed to Merlin--after the Pigeon Hawks in the area--on March 21, 1891.³

Jump-Off Joe Station The Southern Pacific Railroad established the Jump-Off Joe Station in the early 1880's. Merlin expanded rapidly after the town site was platted in 1905. There was a grocery store, a three-story hotel, daily train stops, and even a hanging dentist sign guaranteeing no pain. But once again tragedy struck when on the morning of October 24, 1915 a fire destroyed a block of buildings including the post office and the train depot.³

1. Southern Pacific Company. April 18, 1969. *History Of Southern Pacific In Oregon*. Letter to Josephine County Historical Society.
2. Ed Austin & Ton Dill. 1993. *The Southern Pacific in Oregon*. Everett, WA.
3. Dennis Hotchkiss. *Merlin, Oregon History*. Josephine County Historical Society.

Merlin Depot Mile Post 482.4

Merlin Depot The name Merlin came from a railroad employee named David Loring after seeing the area inhabited by pigeon hawks also known as merlins. Postmaster Lanterman changed the name of the post office to Merlin on March 21, 1891. Following Lanterman as postmaster were George A. Guild, followed by his daughter, Mattie. Ruth Lendberg was postmaster from 1930 to 1967, serving seven presidents. Mrs. Lendberg's little green house served as the post office and it still stands with flagpole on Pleasant Valley Road, just down the street from the present day post office.³

1911 Trip Long time resident Ted Stiewig tells of a trip to see the Barnum and Bailey Circus in Grants Pass in 1911. At that time, Mr. Stiewig was about four years old and lived in Rand, just past Galice. He describes taking Massie's stagecoach at 6:30 in the morning, stopping at Indian Mary's ranch at about 12 noon to change horses, then arriving at the train depot in Merlin at about 2:00 in the afternoon. Since the train didn't arrive until 6:30 p.m., they would stay and have lunch and dinner at Massie's Hotel in Merlin before departing for Grants Pass.³

Mr. Stiewig also describes going to Grants Pass with his friends while living in Merlin. After taking the train to Grants Pass and finding entertainment playing the pool halls, they would make sure they had at least 25 cents for train fare left between them so they could "ride the blinds;" that is, they would jump between the cars unseen. One friend would pay so the train would be sure to stop in Merlin on the way back so they all could jump off.³

Southern Pacific Railroad

Merlin is an unincorporated community in Josephine County, Oregon, United States. The area is known for sport fishing and white water rafting on the Rogue River. Merlin's ZIP code is 97532.

This brochure is one of five in the "depot" series.

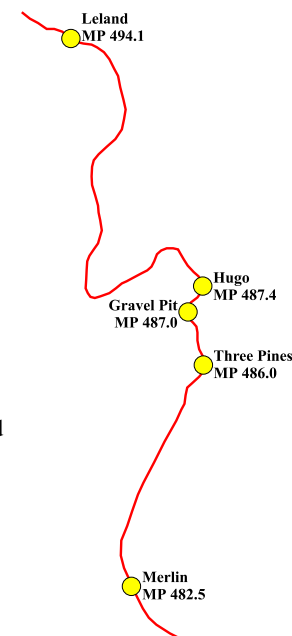
1. Leland 494.1
2. Hugo 487.4
3. Gravel Pit 487.0
4. Three Pines 486.0
5. Merlin 482.4

Mile posts (MP) are in railroad miles from San Francisco.

Gateway To the Wild & Scenic Rogue River

The little hamlet of Merlin is located northeast of Grants Pass and is the home base for many outfitters and fishing guides. This and the fact that Merlin is close to the 84-mile segment of the Rogue River set aside by Congress under the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968, is why Merlin is known as the "Gateway To the Wild & Scenic Rogue River."

More information Contact an officer of the *Hugo Neighborhood* on how you can become involved in your community's land use, and/or history projects.



Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society's Mission

This information brochure is one of a series of documents published by the Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society (*Hugo Neighborhood*). It is designed to be shared with neighbors for the purpose of helping protect our rural quality of life by promoting an informed citizenry in decision-making. The *Hugo Neighborhood* is an informal nonprofit charitable and educational organization with a land use and history mission promoting the social welfare of its neighbors.

Land Use & History

The *Hugo Neighborhood's* land use mission is to promote the social welfare of the citizens of the area by working to promote Oregon Statewide Goal 1 — Citizen Involvement, and by preserving, protecting, and enhancing the livability and economic viability of its farms, forests, and rural neighbors. Its history mission is to educate, collect, preserve, interpret, and research its local history and to encourage public interest in the history of the Hugo area.

Volunteer membership dues are \$10.00 annually per family and normally used for paper, ink, envelopes, publications and mailings. Make checks to the *Hugo Neighborhood* and send them our Treasurer. Send us your e-mail address if you want to know what we are doing.

Hugo Neighborhood

Email: hugo@jeffnet.org

Web Page: <http://jeffnet.org/~hugo/>

Edited by Karen Rose & Mike Walker

HNA&HS Officers

Wayne McKy, Chair
6497 Hugo Road
541-476-4006

Mike Walker, Education Chair
3388B Merlin Rd #195

Hal Anthony, Outreach Chair
3995 Russell Road

Jacqueline Hardwick, Treasurer
885 Red Mountain Drive

Karen Rose, Web Master
575 Red Mountain Drive

Ann Lyneis, Secretary
5100 Tunnel Loop Road

Merlin Depot

Brochure 5 in Depot Series



Merlin Depot

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Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society

Brochure 5 in Depot Series. HNA&HS 2004-37 (RR9)

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